[](http://rds.yahoo.com/_ylt=A0WTb_xX_9xKi0UBk5KJzbkF;_ylu=X3oDMTBqaGRyOHJtBHBvcwM0MQRzZWMDc3IEdnRpZAM-/SIG=1l8g6obp0/EXP=1256083671/**http%3A/images.search.yahoo.com/images/view%3Fback=http%253A%252F%252Fimages.search.yahoo.com%252Fsearch%252Fimages%253Fp%253DSan%252BFrancisco%252BBay%252Bin%252Bthe%252Bsummer%2526b%253D41%2526ni%253D20%2526ei%253Dutf-8%2526pstart%253D1%2526fr%253Datt-portal%26w=500%26h=333%26imgurl=static.flickr.com%252F3267%252F2854432083_72d02f20f7.jpg%26rurl=http%253A%252F%252Fwww.flickr.com%252Fphotos%252F82211994%2540N00%252F2854432083%252F%26size=81k%26name=San%2BFrancisco%2BBa...%26p=San%2BFrancisco%2BBay%2Bin%2Bthe%2Bsummer%26oid=c911c25c0af3f3d6%26fr2=%26fusr=canadianlook...%26no=41%26tt=33892%26b=41%26ni=20%26sigr=11l3ionfi%26sigi=11gq9f5gq%26sigb=13pin09a5)

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| **Estuaries** |

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| |  | | --- | | [[http://www.windows.ucar.edu/earth/Water/images/estuary_sm.jpg](http://www.windows.ucar.edu/tour/link=/earth/Water/images/estuary_lg_jpg_image.html&edu=high)](http://www.windows.ucar.edu/tour/link=/earth/Water/images/estuary_lg_jpg_image.html&edu=high)  **This is a map of estuaries in the Mid-Atlantic region of the U.S. eastern coast including the well-known Chesapeake Bay Estuary. Notice how the rivers get very wide as they get closer to the ocean? This is where the salt water of the ocean is mixing with the fresh water of the rivers. Click on image for full size ( 530K GIF ) *Image courtesy of EPA*** | |

You can say that an estuary has dry seasons (low water levels) and wet seasons (high water levels), but really it is more accurate to say that seasons effect the estuary.   
  
natural seasonal cycles change estuaries by bringing different amounts of rainfall, changing temperatures, and sunlight. Ispring brings much rain.   
  
Often, summer brings hot and dry spells which can cause parts of estuaries to become still and stagnant creating a low oxygen content and high temperatures. While winter can bring ice sheets which scour and remove algae and small organisms off rocks, or freeze and kill shellfish populations.